Provocation of Crisis in Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistan

803. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reported statement of Congressman Frank Pallone condemning on-going pattern by the military regime in Pakistan to provoke a crisis in Kashmir essentially to pick up a fight with India with the results that could be destabilising and devastating to the entire region and the entire world as published in the Hindustan Times dated the 10th February, 2000;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) whether Government have, so far, taken any steps so as to declare Pakistan a terrorist State and for restoration of democracy there?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The reported statement was made by Congressman Frank Pallone on February 8, 2000 on the floor of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States.

(b) The statement is part of a growing international acknowledgement, including in the United States, particularly after the armed intrusion in Kargil, of the role of Pakistan in sponsoring cross-border terrorism and its hostile attitude towards India.

(c) Government takes every opportunity in bilateral and multilateral forums to bring Pakistan's sponsorship of cross-border terrorism to the attention of the international community. Pakistan sponsored terrorist activities have intensified after the defeat of the armed intrusion in Kargil and military take over in Pakistan.

Government continues to raise these issues with all friendly countries and is also engaged in a dialogue with a number of countries on the means to combat terrorism. As part of this process, India and the United States have set up a Joint Working Group on Counter terrorism to intensify their co-operation in this area.